

October 27, 2004 6:00 PM NOV 16 P3:07

Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Honorable Shalala,

As an employee in hearing health for 5 years, I write with respect to hearing aids. As the AARP has confirmed, hearing aids are highly effective but dramatically underutilized medical devices.

I am very concerned with reports that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has reportedly sent to you a proposal for revising the current regulations governing the dispensing of hearing aids in this country that would dramatically increase the cost of hearing health care services and restrict access to hearing health care providers. Please stop and carefully consider the impact that this proposed rule would have on the nation's hearing impaired and on the nation's small business hearing aid specialists. In particular, please ensure that any proposed rule meets the obligations of Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act.

Please don't let the FDA put forth their proposed rule that would impede access to needed hearing health care services for millions of Americans. As a recent college graduate, I am beginning my career as a professional in the hearing healthcare business. It upsets me to think that all my years of hard work may be shattered by the implementation of the proposed act. Not only will my life be drastically changed, but also the lives of many senior citizens who won't be able to access hearing healthcare providers. I have seen the quality of many lives be dramatically enhanced by the services we provide. Please take this and the above mentioned factors into hand before making any hasty decisions.

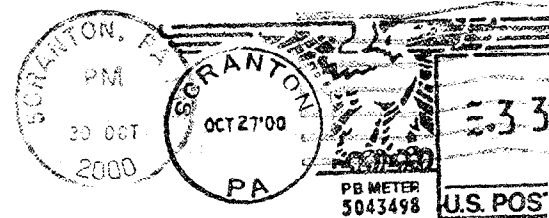
Very truly yours

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